

Message Text

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SUBJECT: JOHN J. MCMULLEN ASSOCIATES

REF: STATE 155382

1. ECONOFF CALLED ON SONATRAM (SOCIETE NATIONALE DES TRANSPORTS MARITIMES) DIRECTOR NOMBO-MBATCHY AND FRENCH ADVISER LAFARGUE CONCERNING MCMULLEN ASSOCIATES (MA) INTEREST IN PROVIDING VESSELS FOR CHARTER TO SONAWG.

2. SONATRAM WILL OFFICIALLY BEGIN OPERATION ON JULY 26 WITH INITIAL CAPITALIZATION OF 1.5 BILLION CFA (APPROXIMATELY US DOLS 6.5 MILLION), OF WHICH 51 0/0 WILL BE HELD BY GOG, 27 0/0 TO 28 0/0 BY ELF GABON, AND BALANCE TO BE OFFERED TO GABONESE FIRMS AND INDIVIDUALS. MIN STATE FOR TRANSPORT RAWIRI WILL BEHPRESIDENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPANY POLICY ANDHXECISION MAKING.

3. SONATRAM PLANS TO OPERATE GENERAL CARGO AND TANKER SXDVICE BETWEEN GABON (PORT GENTIL AND LIBREVILLE) AND EUROPE VIA OTHER WEST AFRICAN PORTS. TANKER SERVICE MAY BE INAUGURATED IN SEPTEMBER AND CARGO SERVICE IN NOVEMBER.

SONATRAM WOULD BE INTERESTED IN NEW VESSELS, CHARGER
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ARRANGEMENTS, AND/OR PURCHASE OF USED VESSELS, PRO-

VIDED THEY ARE LESS THAN TEN YEARS OLD. MAXIMUM VESSEL STRENGTH CONTEMPLATED IS FOUR, POSSIBLY FIVE.

4. SONATRAM'S IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARE ONE PETROL TANKER AND ONE GENERAL CARGO VESSEL BOTH OF WHICH MUST BE LESS THAN TEN YEARS OLD. TANKER SPECIFICATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS: 70,000 DEAD WEIGHT TONNAGE CLASS, MINIMUM LENGTH 218 METERS (MINIMUM LENGTH ACCEPTABLE AT ELF GABON WHARF IN PORT GENTIL), LOADING MANIFOLD IN CENTER OF VESSEL FOR LOADING CONVENIENCE, CAPABLE OF CARRYING THREE TYPES OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, 15/16 KNOTS SPEED CAPABILITY, ENDURANCE 12-15,000 MILES, HEATING FOR ALL TANKS, AIRCONDITIONED QUARTERS FOR EUROPEAN CREW, AND NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT AS CUSTOMARILY REQUIRED ON FRENCH VESSELS.

5. GENERAL CARGO VESSEL MUST BE IN 12,000 METRIC TON DEADWEIGHT TWIN-DECKER CLASS; OVERALL LENGTH 155 METERS; BREADTH 20 METERS; DRAFT 9 METERS; CARGO CAPACITY 15,500 CUBIC METERS OR 450,000 CUBIC FEET; MAIN ENGINE 9,500 HORSE-POWER; SPEED 16 KNOTS; ENDURANCE 12,000 MILES; TWIN DECK; 4 TO 7 HOLDS/HATCHES. HOLDS COULD CONSIST OF 4 HOLDS AND 7 HATCHES WITH LONGITUDINAL BULKHEADS OR 3 HOLDS AND 3 HATCHES OF "JULIANA" TYPE. HOLDS MUST BE ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE CONTAINERS 26 BY EIGHT BY EIGHT FEET. OTHER MISCELLANEOUS SPECIFICATIONS ARE: REFRIGERATED CAPACITY OF 300 CUBIC METERS; HOLD TOP TANK RESISTANCE 10 TONS PER SQUARE METER FOR CARRYING ORE; MECHANICAL VENTILATION; HATCHCOVERS AND TWIN-DECK RESISTANCE THREE TONS PER SQUARE METER; FOLDING TYPE HATCHES; TWIN-DECK COVERS SUITABLE FOR FORKLIFT TRUCKS; NO CRANES ON DECK, ONLY DERRICKS, FOUR OF 20 TON CAPACITY AND ONE HEAVY BOOM OF 60 TO 80 TON CAPACITY; STANCHIONS FOR LOG CARGO, CREW ACCOMMODATIONS FOR 30, COMPLETELY AIR-CONDITIONED; AND NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT COMPARABLE TO CUSTOMARY FRENCH VESSEL REQUIREMENTS.

6. SONATRAM HAS ALREADY APPROACHED SEVERAL OVERSEAS FIRMS CONCERNING VESSEL REQUIREMENTS. PROPOSAL OF GENERAL CARGO VESSEL HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM FRENCH FIRM SOCOMET, FOR "VILLE DE SETE", BUILT IN EAST GERMANY, 13,800 TONS, PRICE US DOLS 6.5 MILLION. KOREAN SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING COMPANY HAS UNCLASSIFIED

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SUBMITTED DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR NEW GENERAL CARGO VESSEL. SONATRAM HAS ALSO APPROACHED JAPANESE FIRMS, BUT NO FURTHER DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE. (FYI: NOMBO-MBATCHY AND LAFARGUE ARE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE LIBREVILLE ON JULY 6 FOR KOREA, PRESUMABLY FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS RE KOREAN PROPOSAL, AND WILL NOT RETURN TO GABON UNTIL JULY 19. END FYI)

7. ONLY OTHER SHIPPING LINE OPERATING IN GABON IS SOMARGA

(SOCIETE MARITIME GABONAISE) WITH EUROPE-PORT GENTIL -
LIBREVILLE SERVICE. SOMARGA HAS ONLY THREE RATHER OLD VESSELS
AND IS PROVATE COMPANY WITH NO PARTICIPATION BY GOG.

8. SONATRAM WILL SOON BE MOVING INTO NEW OFFICE SPACE AND
MAILING ADDRESS WILL BE B.O. 894, LIBREVILLE. NOMBO-MBATCHY
SUGGESTED THAT MCMULLEN ASSOCIATES AND OTHER INTERESTED U.S.
FIRMS FIRST ADDRESS LETTER TO SONATRAM, SUMMARIZING PROPOSALS,
ETC....., BEFORE MAKING DEFINITIVE PLANS TO VISIT GABON. EMBASSY
WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAND CARRY ANY SUCH CORRESPONDENCE DIRECTLY
TO SONATRAM IF US COMPANIES SO DESIRE; OTHERWISE WE WOULD APP-
RECIATE RECEIVING COPIES FOR OUR INFORMATION. STEIGMAN

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